

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 24-26, 28, and 35 are canceled without prejudice.

A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate status identifier for each claim.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 2-13, 15-22, 29-30, 32-34, 36-40, 43-49, and 60-69 are now pending in this application.

Allowable Subject Matter

In section 2 of the Office Action, claims 2-13, 15-22, 29-30, 32-34, 36-40, 43-49, and 60-69 are allowed. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowance for claims 2-13, 15-22, 29-30, 32-34, 36-40, 43-49, and 60-69.

Claim Objections

In section 3 of the Office Action, claims 24 and 25 are objected to based on informalities. Claims 24 and 25 have been canceled without prejudice in order to advance prosecution and expedite the issuance of a patent on the presently allowed claims. Applicants do not necessarily agree with the objection to claims 24 and 25 or the associated reasoning as set forth in the Office Action, and the cancellation of claims 24 and 25 is not an admission that such subject matter is not patentable. Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims 24 and 25 among others in a later application.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In section 5 of the Office Action, claims 24-26, 28, and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Laybourn (U.S. Patent No. 6,625,439) in view of Brunner et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,185,414).

Claims 24-26, 28, and 35 have been canceled without prejudice in order to advance prosecution and expedite the issuance of a patent on the presently allowed claims. Applicants do not necessarily agree with the rejection of claims 24-26, 28, and 35 or the associated reasoning as set forth in the Office Action, and the cancellation of claims 24-26, 28, and 35 is not an admission that such subject matter is not patentable. Applicants reserve the right to pursue claims 24-26, 28, and 35 among others in a later application.

Conclusion

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1447. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

Respectfully submitted,

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